Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUADAL 00844 060033Z
ACTION FBOE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 A-01 VO-03 CA-01 ICA-20
ABF-01 /041 W
----------079591 060426Z /17
R 052330Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL GUADALAJARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4092
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS GUADALAJARA 0844

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CGEN
SUBJECT: BUILDING RENOVATIONS

1. SUMMARY: THE DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED TO PROVIDE ON AN URGENT BASIS FUNDS FOR ADDITIONAL MODIFICATION OF THE VISA SECTION. WE ARE ALREADY INTO OUR BUSY SEASON AND THE PARTIAL COMPLETION OF THE CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY THE CONSULAR ASSISTANCE TEAM SEVERAL MONTHS AGO HAVE LEFT US IN A WORSE OPERATING CONDITION THAN BEFORE. ADDITIONAL CHANGES MUST BE AUTHORIZED TO REMEDY AN INTOLERABLE SITUATION.
2. EVEYONE WHO HAS SEEN THE GUADALAJARA VISA SECTION OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS HAS AGREED THAT MAJOR SPACE ADDITIONS AND/OR MODIFICATIONS ARE NECESSARY IF THE POST IS TO CARRY ITS SHARE OF THE CURRENT MEXICAN VISA LOAD. THE CAT INVESTIGATION DETERMINED THAT THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL BUILDING SPACE WOULD BE OBVIATED BY CERTAIN MODIFICATIONS AND THE USE OF A COMPARATIVELY SMALL AMOUNT OF ICA SPACE. I AGREED, BECAUSE THEIR SUGGESTED FLOOR PLANS LOOKED GREAT COMPARED TO WHAT EXISTED BEFORE, THOUGH I WAS SKEPTICAL THAT THE SPACE ALLOTTED FOR CONSULAR OPERATIONS WOULD BE ADEQUATE EVEN IF AND WHEN ALL RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS WERE MADE.
3. WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF THE CAT VISIT, THE EMBASSY COOPERATED GREATELY BY SENDING A TEAM OF GSO REPAIR EXPERTS WHO WORKED LONG HOURS OVER THE EASTER WEEKEND TO
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PAGE 02 GUADAL 00844 060033Z

EFFECT PART OF THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES. SINCE THEN, MY WORST FEARS, WHICH I HAD EXPRESSED IN MY LETTER OF 4/11 TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY WATSON, HAVE COME TO PASS., I.E., WE ARE INTO OUR BUSY SEASON AND THE MODIFICATION PROJECT HAS GROUND TO A HALT, NOTHING FURTHER HAVING BEEN DONE SINCE EASTER, PARTLY DUE TO A RECALCITRANT BUILDING OWNER BUT ALSO DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS AND ACTION

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

BY THE DEPT. OUR TARGET DATE FOR COMPLETION OF RENO-
VATIONS BY THE END OF MAY AT THE LATEST HAS PAST AND
I SEE NO INDICATION OF MOVEMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE.
4. TO GIVE AND IDEA OF THE PROBLEM, WE NOW HAVE ALL
IV AND NIV APPLICANTS AND INQUIRERS ENTERING ONE DOOR.
OUR DAILY BODY COUNT THROUGH THE DOOR IS FROM 1000 TO
1200. WE HAVE UP TO 350 WAITING APPLICANTS IN THE ROOM
AT ANY ONE TIME. THERE ARE NINE FILE CLERKS IN A ROOM
DESIGNED FOR THREE. NONE OF THE NIV OFFICERS HAVE OFFICE
SPACE AND THE CHIEF OF THE VISA SECTION WORKS FROM A
3-FOOT WIDE CUBICLE SO HIS OFFICE CAN BE USED FOR
INTERVIEWS. THUS OUR MOST URGENT NEEDS ARE FOR ANOTHER
ENTRANCE DOOR, ENLARGED FILE ROOM AND THE ADDITION OF ANOTHER
VISA OFFICE ALL OF WHICH ARE ON CAT'S APPROVED
PLAN. OTHER STRUCTURAL CHANGES AND THINGS SUCH AS SPACE
SAVING WORK STATIONS ARE BADLY NEEDED ALSO, BUT THE
THREE NEEDS CITED ABOVE ARE THE MOST URGENT.
5. FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF FOUR MONTHS DAILY OBSERVATIONS,
IT NOW SEEMS CLEAR TO ME THAT, THE GOOD INTENTIONS AND
DEDICATION OF THE CAT TEAM NOTWITHSTANDING, THERE IS INSUF-
FICIENT SPACE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE VISA OPERATIONS AT THE
POST, EVEN AFTER THE SILVA CASES ARE COMPLETED. I INTEND
TO SUBMIT DETAILED ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTIONSFOR THE EMBASSY'S
AND DEPT'S CONSIDERATION LATER. HOWEVER, THE THREE ALTERATIONS
REFERRED TO ABOVE AND THE ADDITION OF WORK STATIONS WOULD
BE DESIRABLE AND NECESSARY CHANGES IN ANY EVENT AND SHOULD
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PAGE 03 GUADAL 00844 060033Z

BE DONE IMMEDIATELY. URGENT COOPERATION OF THE DEPT TO THAT
END IS REQUESTED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978GUADAL00844
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780235-0402
Format: TEL
From: GUADALAJARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780697/aaaadfnb.tel
Line Count: 97
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 66943d92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION FBOE
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2494019
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BUILDING RENOVATIONS
TAGS: CGEN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/66943d92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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20 Mar 2014
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